with territorial unit, is not organised round a symbolic office such as the Shilluk *reth*ship, the Anuak nobility or the Acholi chiefship. The interaction of the segmentary system is the basis of organisation and co-operation. The Lango organisation closely approaches that of the Luo but, until further information is forthcoming as to the exact position of the Lango *rwot* and the politicism importance of the lineage system, the degree of similarity is difficult to determine. On the basis of present knowledge it could seem that the Lango, with their hierarchy of village headman, *jago* and *rwoth* are more highly organised than the acephalous Luo, with their ritual experts, elders and lineage heads.

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THE LUO HOMESTEAD

The homestead, the residence of an elementary, or sometimes a joint, family, is generally called a *dala* (Bantu) *or pachu* (Nilotic). It is surrounded with a thick hedge of euphorbia, in which is a narrow gap forming the entrance to the kraal round which are grouped the huts and granaries.

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According to Evans-Pritchard, there is no real village group. The head of the homestead is the head of the family occupying it. Each married man has his own hut, with huts for his wives on either side. Unmarried women live in a hut looked after by an old woman, and single men occupy a bachelors' hut near the gate in order to guard against cattle thieves. Sons often go and found their own homesteads if they wish to be independent. The eldest son eventually builds his wife a hut of her own outside his father's homestead and the younger brothers will later do the same. The large polygynous family thus splits up gradually as the sons extend their own family units and form separate homesteads. This process is completed with the death of the original man *dalo* and the inheritance of the widows. The first wife is the chief wife of the homestead, but a husband sets aside so many cattle for each of his wives for use by their families and these are inherited by the sons on the father's death.

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INHERITANCE

Property is inherited by a man's sons or, failing sons, by his brother. A widow, on the death of her husband is inherited by one of his brothers, by a distant kinsman, or, if she is still young, by a son born of a different wife. The widow is *ci lieal*, 'the wife of the grave',(1) and children born to her are called after the dead husband who is regarded as their *pater*.

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MARRIAGE

Bridewealth

The number of bridewealth animals varies according to circumstances. Before the cattle plagues at the end of the 19th century 20 to 40 cattle were given; in 1932 the usual number was 15 to 20, and since that time the number has been further reduced. According to Evans-Pritchard the bridewealth cattle fall into two parts:(2)

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1. The *dho kwey*: the animals first handed over by the husband and due to

(1) Evans-Pritchard, *Africa* VI, 1933, p.161. (2) *Ibid.*, p.139.

4: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FL11 Luo FL11

524 *Games.*—They play a kind of *bau* with sixteen holes; they put three small stones in each hole. The boys play a kind of hockey with a wooden ball.

727 Upon return from war about two out of every three cattle go to the chief; the chief then divides his share of the cattle with his brothers, and a man who has distinguished himself in war is given a reward of cattle by the chief. A man who distinguishes himself in war is also often given a wife without payment.

262 *Food, etc.*—They eat practically all meat except that of the hyæna. Some young men eat leopard meat to make them fierce in fighting; the meat of a serval cat is not eaten. The women do not eat fowls; some women do not eat sheep and eggs; some eat hippopotamus meat, some not; women do not drink milk, but eat it cooked with food. They have a curious custom of mixing cow's urine with the [272] milk of the cow; the urine is allowed to stand a day or two to increase its 826 flavour; they say it increases the amount of the butter and gives it a nice flavour, and it is moreover supposed to have a medicinal effect. The crested crane (*Balearica gibbericeps*) is never killed or eaten by these people.

752 *Medicine, etc.*—They pierce the chest until the lung is reached for chest 757 complaints, and they even sometimes cut a small piece out of the lung through the aperture. They have medicine for wounds and for arrow poison, also for ulcers and for purging, but not for diarrhœa. They also have medicine to avert [164] a threatened miscarriage. They profess to have a certain antidote for snake poison.[1] Venereal disease is practically unknown among the Ja-Luo.

789 Before going to war they often eat the outer seed case of a certain tree, and this is supposed to ensure their return unwounded; it is called *Ochola*.

728 *Peace ceremonies.*—They kill a sheep and put part of it into a wooden mortar used for crushing grain, and the representative of each side takes out a piece and gives it to the opposite side. An old man from the side that is beaten will go to the village of the chief of the enemy and proceed to sweep up the cattle boma; this will be accepted as a sign of submission.

231 *Killing animals for food.*—They kill oxen by sticking a knife into the jugular vein; the head of the beast must be pointed to the west during the operation. Sheep and goats are killed the same way. Fowls are strangled.

● 428 *Succession customs, etc.*—When a man dies the property goes to the brother 768 if the children are small; if the eldest son is grown up he takes the property and gives his brothers a share; but a son is not allowed to take the amount paid by anyone who marries one of his sisters; this amount all goes to the father's brother. The brother of the deceased takes the wives, but the eldest son will probably take the youngest wife of his deceased father.

[1] After considerable difficulty I obtained specimens of the plants said to be used as antidotes for snake poison, and Dr. Rendle, of the Botanical Department, British Museum, has kindly identified the plants for me. One plant, named *Phytolacca Abyssinica*, is used internally, an infusion being made from the leaves. The other plant, *Ipomœa palmata*, is used externally, a plaster of the macerated leaves being placed on the wound. I have not been able to discover the physiological action of these plants.

4: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FL11 Luo FL11

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When a chief dies the son chosen by the chief succeeds him; the successor is chosen as a rule some years before the chief dies. The successor will however divide the private property of his father with his brothers like anyone else.

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Beliefs.—They call the Divinity by the name Chieng, which is the sun; when a man comes out of his house in the morning he spits to the east and in the evening he expectorates to the west. If the sunset is extremely red it is said to be a sign that an important man will die in the tribe. They believe that the spirit of a man goes upwards at death.

If a hailstorm occurs no one goes to work in the fields on the following day.

Shooting stars are said to be a sign of war.

[pp. 36-51 not processed]

When the *dho golo onyimbo* had been paid the bull and the heifer —the *dho dier*—chosen by the bride's brothers after the mock battle outside the bridegroom's *dala* were sent over by the bridegroom. If, after the *dho dier* had been received, the marriage was broken off by the bridegroom he had to pay compensation to the bride's father for the meat and beer consumed at the feast of the *tero nyako*, and he was also bound to pay one bull for the loss of the girl's virginity. Even if the girl, or her father refused the marriage at this stage, the bridegroom was still bound to pay this bull. 584 586

With the payment of the *dho dier* what may be regarded as the ceremonies of the betrothal were completed, and the marriage process entered on a new stage. 585

The stage was marked by various presents of cattle made by the bridegroom to certain of his future relatives. He gave a number (sometimes as many as fifteen) known as the *dho ikeny*, to the bride's full brothers. If she had no brothers the *dho ikeny* passed into the possession of her mother who might, if she wished, allow them to be used in the payment of bride-price for one of her husband's sons by another wife. (In this case the young wife was expected to treat her step-mother-in-law as she would treat her own husband's mother, and to help her in the fields and the home.)

In addition to the *dho ikeny*, the bridegroom sent a bull and a heifer (the *dher wuon nyako*) to the bride's father, and another bull and heifer (the *dho jochiemo*) to her uncles on the father's side.

Finally a cow and a calf (the *dher min nyako*) were sent to the bride's mother. These, with their offspring, became her absolute property. She could, if she chose, use them to contribute towards the payment of bride price for her sons, or equally could refuse to allow them to be used in this way. After her death they were inherited by her youngest son. 585 422 428

When all these had been handed over, and it should be noted that they were, apparently, conventional payments, made without question or discussion so long as they were within the means of the parties concerned, like our own engagement rings and wedding presents, then the discussions began about the number of cattle to be paid over in return for the transfer of the girl from one family to another—the true bride price itself. I believe that in some parts the number to be paid over was settled by discussion between the heads of the two families before the girl had been ceremonially captured. But the elders at Nyahera told me that there the custom was that the bridegroom conducted the discussion with the bride's father himself at this much later point. 583 585

He went over himself to the bride's *dala*, accompanied by his brothers and friends to the number of fifteen or sixteen, and taking

10: Roscoe M-5 (ca. 1900)1915
FL11 Luo FL11

783 of his village and lives in a hut with an old woman who attends to his wants, cooks for him and also feeds him, because he may not touch food with his hands. Separation lasts for three days, and on the fourth day a man who is himself a murderer, or who has at some time killed a man in battle, takes the murderer to a stream where he washes him all over. He then kills a goat and cooks the meat, takes four sticks and places a piece of meat on each stick and gives the man the meat to eat from each in turn. When the meat has been eaten, he gives him four pieces of porridge made into balls and put on the sticks. After this meal the goat-skin is cut into strips, one strip being put on the neck and one strip round each wrist of the murderer. This ceremony is performed by the two men who are alone at the river, and after it the murderer is free to return home. It is said that, until this ceremony is performed, the ghost cannot take its departure for the place of the dead, but hovers about the murderer.

● 428 **Inheritance.** It is usual for a son to inherit property. While a man is still in health, he makes known his wishes as to whom he desires to inherit his property, and his wishes will be observed. Should a son be too young to succeed to his father's estate at the time of death, the deceased man's brother manages the property until the son is old enough to take control. Should a man with property die intestate, the members of his clan elect one of his sons to be heir. There is no fixed law as to which son shall inherit. It is not a question of age nor may the son of a particular wife claim precedence over the sons of other wives, but the clan-members are at liberty to choose the man they consider the most suited for the office. Women never inherit or hold property. The father's stool and bracelet are given to the heir and are the insignia of lawful succession.

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Marriage, Birth and Puberty.

582 **Marriage customs.** It was impossible to discover the ritual of marriage or the groups into which a man might or might not marry, all that could with certainty be learned being that there are exogamous divisions within the tribe.

Besides dowry payments the Luo had other means of obtaining cattle before the advent of the Europeans. Two of these ways, which no longer exist, were the capturing of enemies' cattle during inter-tribal wars and robbery during the night. Because there were only few cattle in those days the number of cattle paid for dowries was very limited, not even half of what it is today. 721 674 583 178

Inheritance and exchange are now the natural means by which the Luo obtain cattle. As mentioned above in discussing dowry the first eight to twelve cattle paid for a dowry, though nominally known as the property of the father of the girl, are in the real sense the inheritance of her full brothers. The father can do anything he likes with them during his life-time, provided he consults the girl's eldest brother. It frequently happens that there is disagreement between the sons and the father, who may try to dispose of these animals without consulting the sons. The other animals belong to certain individuals, e.g., father, uncles and mother. Those of the father if he is a polygamist are inherited by one of his sons who has no sisters. If the father has two or more sisterless sons born of different mothers they inherit equally the special cattle he gets from the dowry of those daughters who have full brothers. These sons also inherit the cattle, goats or sheep that he gets by other means, e.g., those obtained by exchanging millet or maize and those paid to him for the dowries of his nieces. Cattle paid to the mother-in-law by her son-in-law are inherited by her eldest or last son. Usually a father gives more to a son whose mother has died if he is a good son. He calls this son his orphan. If a father loves one of his sons more than the others he may take some of his cattle to one or other of his friends, and tell him that they can only be taken after his death by the loved son. 422 428 595

A man inherits his brother's animals if the brother dies and leaves no son. If a man, having a brother, dies before having children by his wife, and the widow marries someone else of her husband's clan, children born to her by her new husband belong to the brother of her former husband, and so, if they are girls, the brother inherits most of the cattle paid for their dowries. If, however, these girls have a brother, he inherits the cattle. 428 [587]

Some people start to obtain cattle by exchanging their millet or maize for sheep, goats and poultry in the first instance, and when the number of these small stock has increased, they, in turn, are exchanged for cattle. Sometimes a man gives his friend an assurance that if he gives him some goats he will in return give a heifer which can be kept until she calves. After weaning, the calf remains the property of the friend while the cow is returned. 437

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

765 a dead person shave their heads for three days after the death. The eldest son of the deceased sits on a stool outside the village, and has his head shaved. If any one of importance dies, the neighbours do not
766 cultivate for three days after the death. If a big chief dies, all the surrounding people collect at the village, and in such cases even hostilities between clans are suspended, and all join in the funeral rites of the late chief, even if he happens to be at war with some of his dependent clans. In the case of the death of a chief, a new hut is built. The grave of the chief is dug by his brother. A new ox hide is placed at the bottom of the grave, and the head of the corpse is covered with a water-pot. Seeds of every kind of grain grown in the vicinity are put into the grave, but sweet potatoes are excluded. The people dance and drink "tembo" for ten days, and slaughter many oxen. The men wail for ten days, but the women wail every morning for a year. No one cultivates the fields for ten days.

●428 When a man dies, his *property* goes to the brother, if the children are small. If the eldest son is grown up, he takes the property and gives his brothers a share, but a man is not allowed to take the amount paid by any one who marries one of his sisters. This marriage payment goes to
[587] the deceased father's brothers. The brothers of the deceased take his wives,
[622] but the eldest son probably takes the youngest wife of his deceased father. When a chief dies, the son whom he has chosen succeeds him. This successor is chosen really some years before the chief dies. The successor divides the private property of the chief with his brothers.

727 When a warrior *has killed a man in warfare*, he must (besides
782 shaving his head) catch a fowl and hang it round his neck head uppermost. He must not enter his home village until this has been done. Whilst the fowl is suspended to the man's neck by the beak its head is severed from the body, and the head is left hanging from the man's neck. The warrior then enters the village, and shortly afterwards prepares a big feast to propitiate the man he has killed, so that his ghost may not give
788 trouble. If a house is struck by *lightning*, and any one is killed inside, the head-man of the village must obtain a male fowl of a red colour and walk round the house holding up the fowl three times. The house is then broken up, and the wood is used for other purposes. When desiring
728 *to make peace* with another tribe with whom they have been at war, they kill a sheep and put part of it into a wooden mortar such as is used for crushing grain. The representatives of each side then take out pieces of the flesh and exchange them reciprocally. An old man belonging to the side which has been worsted, and which is suing for peace, must
[231] then go to the head village of the conqueror and proceed to sweep up the cattle kraal. This is accepted as a kind of submission.

145 Like the Bantu Kavirondo, the Ja-luo are in the main *a healthy people.*

15: Millikin U-4 (no date) 1906 FL11 Luo FL11

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when they pass outside; this happens before the "ngoma," and is a sort of honour to the dead.

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The wife or wives of the deceased person go to the sons, the eldest having preference, but in no case does a son take his own mother, and any property of the deceased man is taken by the sons in the proportion of the dowry originally paid by the father for the wife which each son has claimed.

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Should a wife of the dead man have a daughter, or several daughters and sons, the dowry received in the event of one of them being married will go to the girl's brother, and not to the step-father; but in the event of the girl having no brother, the step-father will claim the dowry.

A. S. MILLIKIN.

[p.55]

16: Northcote G-5 (no date) 1907 FL11 Luo FL11

allow a man's head and shoulders to enter; the roof is of grass. Outside these again is the circle of huts, strongly built of sticks and grass and with the sides plastered with a mixture of dung and mud. Each married male in the village has his own hut, and besides this a hut for each wife and two smaller huts, one for his sons and another for his daughters, which latter live with an old woman, often their grandmother. The two sexes are kept rigidly apart, and though, as will be seen, the Jaluo notion of morality is scarcely the same as the European, there is little of the promiscuity of intercourse among the Kavirondo which is so noticeable a feature among the other Nilotic tribes of British East Africa.

As the sons grow up they marry and build houses in the father's village for themselves and their wives. The eldest son usually remains with his father for good and all, but as the other sons in turn become fathers of families, they often build villages for themselves near the paternal village; as often as not, however, the sons keep together after the father's death, the eldest becoming the head of the family.

There is a strict law of exogamy among the Jaluo, though a son may marry his father's wife if she is no blood relation of his; similarly two sisters are often simultaneously the wives of one man.

Their rule of inheritance, though apparently complicated, is really simple. The husband sets aside so many of his cattle to provide food for each wife, the chief or first wife naturally having a larger share than the rest. On his death the wife and the cattle set aside for her pass to her sons, her eldest son as the new *pater familias* again getting the larger share. If a man has no sons by the first wife but sons by another, all the property, including the first wife and her daughters, pass to these sons; if a man has no sons, all his property passes to his brother or nearest male blood relation; females can own no property, being themselves but chattels. On the death of a chief his power descends upon the eldest son of his first wife, even though his second or third wife may have borne him a son before the son by the first wife was born; *i.e.*, A is his first and chief wife and E his second. A may bear him two daughters, B and C, and then a son D. Though in the meanwhile E has borne him a son F, D will become chief in virtue of his mother's priority, even though he has an elder brother (F). But if D is not of fit age to govern, F may become chief, as a regency is too advanced an institution; and similarly if both D and F are infants, some elder blood relation, such as their eldest uncle, will succeed their father. This rule not unnaturally leads to much quarrelling, as, when the dispossessed heir grows up he often lays claim to rule, with disastrous results.

A great many formalities attend a Kavirondo marriage. As has been remarked above, exogamy is the strict rule. The young man having declared his choice to his father, the latter goes off to the girl's father and arranges the dowry. He then returns, and the intending bridegroom goes over with a bull or some goats as earnest money and partakes of the preliminary feast, an essential feature of this being an offering set aside for the sun-god, consisting of a little meat, part of a

17: Southall E-5 (1946-1947) 1952 FL11 Luo FL11

said that since property has passed to the lineage of a wife it has no claim on her offspring, consequently they take their father's lineage affiliation and can always be claimed by him because they result from his semen.

The Luo conceptualization of primary kinship attitudes is in conformity with the patterns of actual behaviour briefly outlined. The relation of co-wives is visualized as one of jealous rivalry. The term for it in Dholuo is *nyiego* and co-wives refer to one another as *nyieka*.[1] From co-wives themselves this relationship tends to spread to the elementary families of which they are the female heads. Children stick up for their mother's rights over against those of a stepmother. They stand to gain all round from successful competition with the other elementary families of their homestead. This is not of great permanent importance to the daughters, but the sons have everything that is worth while to gain or lose in their rivalry with the groups of their half-brothers. Their inheritance of the most valuable and essential property—livestock and land—depends on the allocation made by their father between the elementary families. But for uterine brothers it also depends on the allocation made between them within their elementary family. Consequently uterine brothers have material reasons for competing with one another, and also for combining together to compete with all other groups of uterine brothers in their compound family, being reinforced in this solidarity by the coincidence of their mother's interests against her co-wives. These pivotal relationships within household and homestead are conceptualized by the Luo as the origin of lineage structure. It might be objected that the orientations noted here are of a kind which naturally tend to be latent in any polygynous family system. The point is, however, that such orientations not only occur in the Luo family but are expected to occur; that the pattern of residence, the kinship terminology, the general conduct of family affairs, and the usual behaviour of its members all reflect this particular alinement rather than any other of a number of alinements possible in polygynous families, and are consciously thought to do so.[2] The main features are represented diagrammatically below (see p. 21).

It is impossible, within the space of this article, to give a full account of marriage types and contracts, the system of inheritance and of succession to property and authority, exogamy, blood-feuds, ancestor worship, and the like. All these matters have a bearing on lineage organization, and I try to give here a brief general account of them, sufficient only to make clear the nature of their connexion with the other material presented.[3]

Exogamy is an attribute of the maximal lineage.[4] This study is mainly concerned

[1] *nyiego* v., to snatch suddenly, or take by surprise; *nyiego* n., the relation of co-wives, jealousy; *nyieka* n., my co-wife, my partner in jealousy.

[2] In fact there are great similarities in this respect with the family structure of the Kikuyu, Kamba, and other East African peoples, but unfortunately the material on them does not tell us to what extent it is reflected in their lineage systems. Compare also Mayer, op. cit., p. 6. The most valuable comparative treatment of family structure from this angle is that of Fortes, *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*, esp. iii, and *The Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 195–6 note and p. 198.

[3] For further details see Paul Mboya, 'Luo Kitgi gi Timbegi' (*East African Standard*, Nairobi), an English translation of which is to be published under the auspices of the East Africa Literature Bureau. See also Evans-Pritchard, 'Marriage Customs of the Luo of Kenya', *Africa*, vol. xx, 1950, p. 132.

[4] A Luo maximal lineage, as the most inclusive agnatic descent group based on an accepted and putatively continuous genealogy, may coincide with 'clan', or it may be a segment within it where clan refers to a group united by a sentiment of common descent without this explicit genealogical basis.